



# Town of Berwyn Heights

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**MAYOR**  
Stephen D. Isler  
**COUNCIL MEMBERS**  
Jason W. Papanikolas (Mayor Pro Tem)  
Amanda M. Dewey  
Jeffrey Jay Osmond  
Ethan D. Sweep

## Worksession Minutes September 9, 2019 7:00 pm

Present were Mayor Stephen Isler, Mayor Pro Tempore (MPT) Jason Papanikolas, Councilmembers (CMs) Ethan Sweep, and Jeffrey Jay Osmond. CM Amanda Dewey had an excused absence. Also present were Town Manager (TM) Maria Broadbent, Chief Kenneth Antolik, Clerk Kerstin Harper, and citizens.

### **1. Approval of Agenda**

CM Sweep moved and CM Osmond seconded to amend the agenda to postpone discussion of the M-NCPPC Open Space Correspondence to the next worksession. The motion passed 5 to 0.

### **2. Announcements**

Mayor Isler thanked everyone who donated school supplies for the 'Backpack Project.' He, MPT Papanikolas, CM Dewey and Assistant to the Town Manager Yvonne Odoi brought the supplies to a get familiar with your teacher event at Berwyn Heights Elementary School (BHES). Principal, teachers and students were very appreciative of the donations.

CM Sweep reported he received a comment about yard waste not being picked on a normal schedule after Labor Day. He plans to announce any refuse pickup changes in the future. TM Broadbent added that the Town will put together a refuse pickup schedule for the rest of the year, so residents will know well in advance of any changes. The new recycling Toters have arrived and Public Works will start delivery to residents the week of September 23.

***BHES Northbay fundraiser:*** Mayor Isler welcomed BHES 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher Bret Goldstein for an announcement about the fundraiser he is leading. Mr. Goldstein said BHES 6<sup>th</sup> graders have attended a week-long adventure camp at North Bay, located at the northern tip of Chesapeake Bay, since 2006. In those days, the school qualified for Title I funds to finance the event, but this is no longer the case. Since then, the school has held fundraisers to enable all 6<sup>th</sup> grade students to attend.

Mr. Goldstein said last year he had the idea to raise funds by bicycling to North Bay, which is a distance of 100 miles from BHES, and raised \$9,000. He will do it again this year. To publicize the ride, he has contacted local TV stations. NBC4 plans to send a crew to the school to cover the send-off this Thursday starting at 5:30 a.m. He hopes people in the broader community will come out to support the ride and contribute through the PGCPs-approved website [donorschoose.org](http://donorschoose.org). The school has already raised \$5,200 but aims to reach \$6,600.

Mayor Isler said the Town is happy to help publicize the fundraiser and he and MPT Papanikolas plan to be there.

### **3. Discussion Items**

**Citizen Survey:** CM Sweep said there is nothing much new to discuss except an update on the survey schedule. The Council will discuss survey questions at the next worksession and then invite Town departments, committees and organizations to submit questions. Questions can be emailed to [adewey@berwynheightsmd.org](mailto:adewey@berwynheightsmd.org). The deadline for submitting questions is October 14. The survey will be mailed out on November 8 with a request to return them by November 22.

**Purchase of police vehicle:** TM Broadbent explained that the Council approved the purchase of 2 police vehicles during the budget process with the stipulation that they be hybrids or another type of energy-efficient vehicle. However, the appropriation was based on purchasing regular gasoline-powered cars. Hybrid vehicles are more expensive and, at the moment, the Town plans to buy only one. The purchase of a second vehicle may occur if there are enough savings from purchasing the refuse truck through a purchasing cooperative to cover the difference. The Town does not have a police vehicle replacement reserve and these vehicles are purchased on a pay-go basis.

Chief Antolik explained that Detective Unger contacted dealers in the area to find the best deal on a Ford Explorer Interceptor Hybrid. The lowest price of \$37,700 was available from Apple Ford of Columbia through a Montgomery County police vehicle contract. This is \$6,200 more than the Dodge Durango BHPD had originally priced, but it is expected to save money in the long run because of lower gasoline usage. Chief Antolik said this police interceptor hybrid received very good reviews from the Michigan State University test lab, which tests most police interceptors in the U.S. market.

TM Broadbent said the police vehicle purchase will be on the September 11 Town meeting agenda for approval. In response to CM Sweep, Chief Antolik said his skepticism about adding hybrid vehicles to the fleet has been allayed by a number of good reviews he has read since the Council decided on a hybrid vehicle.

Chief Antolik also announced a multi-cultural event BHPD is sponsoring with the Public Works and Code Departments to be held on Saturday, September 14. Police Clerk Muralles worked hard to put together a program of music, free food and drinks, and fun activities. Visits from the mounted Park Police, the Department of Motor Vehicles and other agencies are also planned. All are welcome to attend.

**County zoning rewrite:** TM Broadbent said she, CM Dewey and CM Sweep attended a presentation on the Prince George's County zoning rewrite, hosted by Councilmember Glaros. As a largely residential community, Berwyn Heights is largely unaffected by the changes, except for some minor changes in the mixed-use zone along Branchville Road. The main purpose of the zoning rewrite was to simplify and streamline the zoning code, which had become unwieldy over many years of amendments.

TM Broadbent said residents can expect to receive a mailing on the zoning rewrite in the next few days and are encouraged to visit the County's zoning rewrite website to be informed about the changes being made in the zoning code. She will reach out to the Planning Department about coming to a Council meeting and giving a presentation on the zoning rewrite and its impact on Berwyn Heights.

#### **4. Minutes**

The Council reviewed the August 5 worksession minutes. On a motion by MPT Papanikolas, seconded by CM Sweep, the minutes were approved 5 to 0. The August 14 Town meeting minutes were reviewed for approval at the Town meeting.

As a follow-up to a variance decision made at the August Town meeting, TM Broadbent noted that the resident requesting a driveway variance did not in fact need it. Staff enquired with the Board of Zoning Appeals and learned that the applicants may park their cars on the street because it is an existing house. A driveway would be required if a new house were to be built.

#### **5. Department Reports**

Mayor Isler noted that Chief Antolik already gave a report on BHPD activities. He then read a report on recreation activities provided by CM Dewey in her absence. The distribution of school supplies at BHES preview night was a great success, as was the last of the summer concerts by the Berwyn Heights All Stars. Among upcoming events are the Community Garden Party, Ice Cream Social, Hello Huskies, a Pet Pop-up Event and Trunk or Treat.

MPT Papanikolas said school is back in session and reminded parents that children may not be dropped off at 7 a.m. unless they are enrolled in the before or after-care programs. If they are found by themselves unsupervised the police will give them a ride back home. Mayor Isler added that the police are also strictly enforcing the speed limit of 20 mph around the school and the prohibition to pass school buses with a stop sign out. Fines for violations of that traffic rule can be up to \$1,000. CM Sweep said fall is coming and Public Works will publish reminders about leaf disposal. He also announced an open house on the zoning rewrite on November 7, 6-8 p.m., at the College Park Airport Operations Building.

CM Osmond asked for an update on the search for a Code Inspector. TM Broadbent said two candidates were interviewed but she did not think they were a good fit for the Town. The search has been reopened. Code Clerk Zelda Bell will stay on part-time to help with inspections and migrating files into the Comcate system. In Administration Department news, Clerk Harper and Assistant Odoi are finalizing the transition to paperless agenda packets. The Town's IT vendor has prepared the I-pads for use, which should be available for the next worksession.

Phil Ventura, 57<sup>th</sup> Avenue asked whether any paper agenda packets will be made available for citizens attending the meeting. TM Broadbent said there will be some. The electronic packets are already available on the Town website home page under 'Meeting Videos'.

#### **6. Town Council Schedule**

The Council reviewed the upcoming Town Council schedule. Mayor Isler and CM Osmond will be unable to attend the August Town Council meeting because they will attend back-to-school night. Mayor Isler will attend a meet and greet with State's Attorney Braveboy on October 1. Town Offices will be closed on September 27 for staff development.

#### **7. Citizens Discussion**

Phil Ventura commented it appears that Code enforcement is making progress with having dead trees removed around Town. However, there is a large dead tree in the back of the Town Center that may damage vehicles parked underneath it if branches break off. Second, he thinks inviting residents to

donate voluntarily towards a worthy cause, such as the 'Backpack Project' is a better approach than funding them through taxes. He suggested that the Council's decision to increase its donation to Berwyn Heights Volunteer Fire Department to \$10,000 several years ago to make up for a decline in donations from residents could be viewed as an 'end run' around the people's wishes not to give more.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Signed: *Kerstin Harper*, Town Clerk